



Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Chairman Wang Huning with Prez of the French National Assembly Yael Braun-Pivet in Beijing



Malaysian PM Anwar Ibrahim with Indonesian Prez Prabowo Subianto after a joint press conference at Merdeka Palace in Jakarta, Indonesia



Shiite worshippers gather at the shrine of Imam Moussa al-Kadhim on the eve of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calendar, in Baghdad, Iraq



People wearing rooster costumes protest against laws that ban animal blood sports like cockfighting and bullfighting in Mexico City

allovertheworld



A life-sized animal puppet, part of 'The Herds', is seen in London during its journey from the Congo Basin to the Arctic Circle, representing the effects of climate disaster

Finnish women flock to prepare for war, other crises

UPINNIEMI, (FINLAND): Wearing red overalls and thick rubber boots, women at a recent Finnish civil preparedness course jumped from a pier at a naval base into the chilly Baltic Sea. The 28 women in the "safety at sea" course were glad to have secured a spot at one of the increasingly popular courses. The training sessions are organised to prepare women for emergencies caused by power outages, natural phenomena, cyberattacks or military conflicts. "Interest in preparedness courses has increased massively over the past few years, especially among women," Eija Eriksson, a volunteer leader at the weekend course, told AFP Eriksson is a member of the Women's National Emergency Preparedness Association, which organised the event in tandem with the National Defence Training Association of Finland (MPK).

Turkey jails 4 border guards for life for torturing Syrian migrants to death

ISTANBUL: A court in Turkey has given life sentences to four border guards convicted of torturing two Syrian migrants to death in March 2023, according to a verdict seen by AFP on Friday. Seven other officers were also sentenced in May to up to seven and a half years in prison for "intentional injuries" and "destroying and hiding evidence" in the case, according to the verdict. Prosecutors said the officers, stationed along the Syrian border in Hatay province, had arrested a group of Syrians, including eight who had entered Turkey illegally. Two of them, Abdurrezzak Kastal and Abdulsettar Elhaccar, were found to have been beaten with iron bars and forced to swallow petrol, leading to their deaths. The others were returned to Syria and hospitalised.

Sri Lanka arrests ex-airline boss over corruption

COLOMBO: Sri Lankan anti-corruption officers on Friday arrested the former national airline chief for alleged graft, including taking cash to bankroll his brother-in-law Mahinda Rajapaksa's failed presidential re-election bid in 2015. The Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption (CIABOC) said Nishantha Wickremasinghe was taken into custody at his home in Colombo. Along with the alleged taking of airline cash to fund Rajapaksa's election bid, he was charged with two other counts of corruption. A criminal investigation into a \$2.3 billion Airbus aircraft deal, when Wickremasinghe was chairman of SriLankan Airlines in 2013, is still ongoing. A joint probe by teams from Britain, France and the United States in 2020 found that Airbus had used third parties to bribe government officials to sell its aircraft, including to Sri Lanka.

Actor Brad Pitt's LA home burgled and ransacked: reports

LOS ANGELES: Burglars broke into Brad Pitt's Los Angeles home on Thursday, ransacking the property and fleeing with stolen items while the Oscar-winning actor was traveling to promote his new racing thriller "F1," US media reported. A Los Angeles Police Department spokesperson told NBC News that a break-in took place at a residence in the Los Feliz neighborhood around 10:30 pm (0530 GMT), without officially confirming who owned the home. Police sources told NBC News and the Los Angeles Times that three suspects climbed over a front fence and broke in through the home's front window before ransacking the location and fleeing with some belongings. The value of the stolen items has not been disclosed. Pitt was not home at the time, as he has been on a global promotional tour for his new movie "F1." The 61-year-old actor attended the film's premiere in London this week.

Rome, Venice and 19 other Italian cities on red alert for heat this weekend

ROME: Italy's health ministry warned residents and tourists on Friday of soaring temperatures across the country, issuing a red alert for 21 cities this weekend. The ministry issued its top red alert for cities including the capital Rome, economic powerhouse Milan and Venice - where the rich and famous are celebrating the wedding of Amazon tycoon Jeff Bezos. It said temperatures could rise to 37 degrees Celsius (99 degrees Fahrenheit) in places. The ministry - which publishes green, yellow, orange and red heatwave warnings daily for 27 large Italian cities - advised people not to go outdoors between 11am and 6pm if possible, and seek shelter in airconditioned public places. In Venice, the temperature was set to hit 32C on Saturday - when Bezos and Lauren Sanchez are expected to be throwing a dance party starring Lady Gaga -- but feel like around 36C due to humidity.

Trump says US signed trade deal with China, offers no details

Claims he expects to soon have a deal with India

AP, BANGKOK: The US and China have signed an agreement on trade, President Donald Trump said, adding he expects to soon have a deal with India.

Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick told Bloomberg TV that the deal was signed earlier this week. Neither Lutnick nor Trump provided any details about the agreement.

"We just signed with China the other day," Trump said late Thursday.

Lutnick said the deal was "signed and sealed" two days earlier.

It was unclear if the latest agreement was different from the one Trump announced two weeks earlier that he said would make it easier for American industries to obtain much-needed magnets and rare earth minerals. That part cleared the way for the trade talks to continue, while the US agreed to stop trying to revoke visas of Chinese nationals on US college campuses.

The agreement follows initial talks in Geneva in early May that led both sides to postpone massive tariff hikes that were threatening to freeze much trade between the two countries. Later talks in London set a framework for negotiations and the deal mentioned by Trump appeared to formalise that agreement



China's Commerce Ministry said Friday that the two sides had "further confirmed the details of the framework".

But its statement did not explicitly mention US access to rare earths, minerals used in high-tech applications that have been at the centre of the negotiations.

"China will approve the export applications of controlled items that meet the conditions in accordance with the law. The United States will cancel a series of restrictive measures taken against China accordingly. It is hoped that

the United States and China will meet each other halfway," it said.

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"The president likes to close these deals himself. He's the dealmaker. We're going to have deal after deal," Lutnick said.

China has not announced any new agreements, but it announced earlier this week that it was speeding up approvals of exports of rare earths, materials used in high-tech products such as electric vehicles. Beijing's limits on exports of rare earths have been a key point of contention.

The Chinese Commerce Ministry said Thursday that Beijing was accelerating review of export license applications for rare earths and had approved "a certain number of compliant applications".

Export controls of the minerals apparently eclipsed tariffs in the latest round of trade negotiations between Beijing and Washington after China imposed permitting requirements on seven rare earth elements in April, threatening to disrupt production of cars, robots, wind turbines and other high-tech products in the US and around the world.

SC limits nationwide injunctions; Trump birthright order in limbo

AP, WASHINGTON: A divided Supreme Court on Friday ruled that individual judges lack the authority to grant nationwide injunctions, but the decision left unclear the fate of President Donald Trump's restrictions on birthright citizenship.

The outcome was a victory for the Republican president, who has complained about individual judges throwing up obstacles to his agenda.

But a conservative majority left open the possibility that the birthright citizenship changes could remain blocked nationwide. Trump's order would deny citizenship to US-born children of people who are in the country illegally.

Birthright citizenship automatically makes anyone born in the United States an American citizen, including children born to mothers in the country illegally. The right was enshrined soon after the Civil War in the Constitution's 14th Amendment.

In a notable Supreme Court decision from 1898, United States vs Wong Kim

Ark, the court held that the only children who did not automatically receive US citizenship upon being born on US soil were the children of diplomats, who have allegiance to another government; enemies present in the US during hostile occupation; those born on foreign ships; and those born to members of sovereign Native American tribes.

The US is among about 30 countries where birthright citizenship the principle of jus soli or "right of the soil" is applied. Most are in the Americas, and Canada and Mexico are among them.

Trump and his supporters have argued that there should be tougher standards for becoming an American citizen, which he called "a priceless and profound gift" in the executive order he signed on his first day in office.

The Trump administration has asserted that children of noncitizens are not "subject to the jurisdiction" of the United States, a phrase used in the amendment, and therefore are not entitled to citizenship.

UK school bus plunges into river, dozens injured

AP, LONDON: A double-decker bus carrying high school students plunged into a river in southern England on Thursday, sending the driver and four teens to the hospital and leaving more than a dozen others with minor injuries, officials said.

The bus was bound for Barton Peveril Sixth Form College, a school for 16- to 18-year-olds, when it went off a road in Eastleigh and plunged into the River Itchen. The cause of the crash was being investigated by police and the bus company. "It must have been terrifying," said Inspector Andy Tester of the Hampshire Constabulary.

All 19 passengers on board were either able to get off the bus or were rescued, police said. The bus driver and one student had serious injuries but were expected to survive.

Police said there was no indication as to why the bus veered off the road. But a woman who said she heard a screeching sound and saw the crash said the driver told her he couldn't stop.

"I heard some noise, I looked out of the window and he just came careening into the river," Kelly West said. "It felt very fast and obviously he just went straight through the barriers and into the river."

Talks with US complicated by US strike on nuclear sites: Iran's FM

AP, DUBAI: Iran's top diplomat said the possibility of new negotiations with the United States on his country's nuclear programme has been "complicated" by the American attack on three of the sites, which he conceded caused "serious damage".

The US was one of the parties to the 2015 nuclear deal in which Iran agreed to limits on its uranium enrichment program in exchange for sanctions relief and other benefits.

That deal unravelled after US President Donald Trump pulled the US out unilaterally during his first term. Trump has suggested he is interested in new talks with Iran and said the two sides would

IRAN'S KHAMENEI WARNS US OF FUTURE RETALIATION IN FIRST STATEMENT SINCE CEASEFIRE

AP, DUBAI: Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said Thursday that his country had delivered a "slap to America's face" by striking a US air base in Qatar and warned against further attacks in his first public comments since a ceasefire agreement with Israel. Khamenei's prerecorded speech that aired on Iranian state television, his first appearance since June 19, was filled with warnings and threats directed toward the United States and Israel, the Islamic Republic's longtime adversaries. The 86-year-old, a skilled orator known for his forceful addresses to the country's more than 90 million people, appeared more tired than he had just a week ago, speaking in a hoarse voice and occasionally stumbling over his words.

meet next week.

In an interview on Iranian state television broadcast late Thursday, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi left open the possibility that his country would

again enter talks on its nuclear program, but suggested it would not be anytime soon.

"No agreement has been made for resuming the negotiations," he said.

"No time has been set, no promise has been made, and we haven't even talked about restarting the talks."

The American decision to intervene militarily "made it more complicated and more difficult" for talks on Iran's nuclear program, Araghchi said.

In Friday prayers, many imams stressed Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's message from the day before that the war had been a victory for Iran.

Cleric Hamzeh Khalili, who also is the deputy chief justice of Iran, vowed during a prayer service in Tehran that the courts would prosecute people accused of spying for Israel "in a special way".

1 killed, 11 wounded in intense Israeli strikes on south Lebanon

AP, NABATIEH: Israel's air force carried out intense airstrikes on mountains overlooking a southern city in Lebanon on Friday, in an attack that the Israeli military said targeted underground assets of the Hezbollah militant group.

Shortly afterward, an apartment building in the nearby city of Nabatieh was struck, killing one woman, wounding 11 and knocking out the building's top floor, according to Lebanon's state news agency.

The state-run National News Agency reported that the woman killed lived in Germany and had come back to Lebanon less than a month earlier to visit family. It wasn't immediately clear



Smoke erupts from a fire following an Israeli strike at the UNRWA's Osama bin Zaid school in the Saftawi district in western Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip

if she was a German citizen. The woman's apartment was hit by an Israeli drone strike, according to the report.

The Israeli army, in a statement posted on X, denied targeting a civilian building. The statement said the build-

ing was hit by a Hezbollah rocket that had been stored at another location that was targeted by an airstrike and "launched, and exploded as a result." It blamed Hezbollah for storing weapons near residential areas.

SPIN & FUN



A festival goer takes part in a Zorbing experience during the second day of the Glastonbury festival at Worthy Farm in the village of Pitton in Somerset, southwest England

Bangladesh pushes solar to tackle energy woes

AFP, DHAKA: Bangladesh's caretaker leader has ordered all government institutions including ministry buildings and schools to install solar panels to ease chronic power problems in a country regularly hit by deadly heatwaves.

The South Asian nation of 170 million people has set itself a target of generating 20 percent of its power from renewable energy by 2030 -- a four-fold increase -- and rising to 30 percent by 2040, the government said in a statement.

"Bangladesh is lagging far behind its neighbouring countries", the statement issued by the office of interim leader Muhammad Yunus read.

"Only 5.6 percent of our total requirement is currently met from renewable sources," it added, noting that in neighbouring India, it is 24 percent and in Sri Lanka, nearly 40 percent.

The government's rooftop solar programme will see all government offices, schools, colleges and hospitals installed with panels



immediately, the statement issued late Thursday said.

The micro-finance pioneer said the panels would be installed and operated

panels by using government power agencies.

"The private sector will handle overall maintenance and keep the systems operational for their own business interests", the statement said.

"The government will only provide them with rooftop access".

The government has also initiated tender processes for 55 solar power plants with a total 5,238 megawatts capacity.

Bangladesh relies heavily on importing cross-border power from neighbouring India, as well from Nepal, especially when demand soars during the blistering heat when consumers rely on energy-hungry air conditioners to keep cool.

Dhaka also began construction of the Russia-backed nuclear plant at Rooppur in 2017. The much-delayed 2,400-megawatt project will be Bangladesh's largest power station by generating capacity once fully operational.